

A Summary of Governor Haley Barbour's 2007 Legislative Agenda

- The people of Mississippi have benefited from Governor Barbour's leadership and his experience working with the federal government. Governor Barbour provided a comprehensive plan to help Mississippi's recovery and renewal efforts after Hurricane Katrina, the worst natural disaster in American history. New, innovative programs are being created and implemented to assist disaster victims and unprecedented federal support is helping the state recover.
- Governor Barbour and the Legislature have worked well together to improve the lives of Mississippians – because of the most comprehensive tort reform law in the country, the health care crisis caused by lawsuit abuse is over; we have dug out of a \$720 million budget hole without raising taxes by getting control of spending; we have increased support for reformed workforce training programs; and we have modernized our economic development incentives. More people are working than when Governor Barbour took office three years ago and they are earning more money.
- Governor Barbour has proposed a conservative, structurally-balanced budget that replenishes the state's rainy day fund and focuses on increased support for all levels of education.
- We must not dip into or divert any money away from our rainy day fund. We should rebuild our state's savings account in preparation for when the post-Katrina building boom or national economy slows down.
- Once we have the most up-to-date revenue projections in March, we can develop a complete state budget at that time. The Governor expects that with its reduced price tag, we can afford to fully fund the Mississippi Adequate Education Program this year and keep 100% funding each year from now on. We can also support our teachers. We can give state employees another pay raise. We can give increases to higher education and law enforcement. However, we can't do everything everybody wants to do. We can have strong, stable funding for our priorities, but only if we are prudent about spending overall.
- Governor Barbour is focused on fighting crime by proposed tough new penalties that will put armed convicted felons behind bars and significantly increase the number of state narcotics agents. Under Governor Barbour and this Legislature's leadership, the state has had a renewed focus in fighting drug crime.
- Governor Barbour was right to address the need to reform the state-sponsored insurance wind pool. There are steps the Legislature can take to enact long-term reforms, which will protect the availability of affordable insurance from the Coast to the Tennessee state line.